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J.C. WATTS, JR.
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-Update-

H.R. 4425-FY 2001 Military Construction Appropriations Act (Conference Report)

Floor Situation:

The House is considering the conference report to H.R. 4425 this evening, Thursday, June 29, 2000 under a unanimous consent agreement. It will be in order to consider H.R. 4425 any time on or before the legislative day of June 30, 2000. The time on the conference report will be equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived and the bill is to be considered as read. H.Res. 540 is laid on the table.

Summary: The conference report to H.R. 4425 appropriates \$8.8 billion in FY 2001—\$200 million more than the House-passed bill, \$493 million more than last year, and \$800 million more than the president's request—for military construction activities of the Department of Defense. Specifically, the conference report provides (1) \$4.2 billion for domestic and overseas military construction projects (\$491 million more than the House-passed bill and \$206 million more than last year); (2) \$3.6 billion for military family housing (\$47 million more than the House-passed bill and \$6 million less than last year), which includes \$2.7 billion for operation and maintenance of existing units; (3) \$1 billion for base realignment and closure accounts (\$150 million less than the House-passed bill); and (4) \$172 million for NATO Security Investment Program (\$6 million less the House-passed bill). Although the overall amounts are approximately the same as in the House-passed bill, some of the priorities and specific projects funded by the report differ. The conference report includes a few major changes from the House-passed bill. Specifically, the conference report provides: \$1 billion for Base Realignment and Closure accounts, \$150 million less than the House-passed bill; \$693 million for the National Guard and Reserves accounts, \$235 million more than the House-passed bill; \$3.5 billion for military construction for the active forces and defense agencies (excluding Guard and Reserve), \$326 million less than the House-passed bill; \$100 million reduction to previous

Military Construction Appropriations Acts and \$83 million reduction to foreign currency fluctuation accounts not included in the House-passed bill. The conference agreement includes the Senate level of \$85 million, \$20 million more than the House-passed level, to begin building radar sites in Alaska for the national missile defense system. Legislative History: The House passed H.R. 4425 on May 16 by a vote of 386-22. The Senate passed S. 2551 on May 18 by a vote of 96-4.

Additional Information: To see how H.R. 4425 passed the House, see *Legislative Digest* Vol. XXIX, #13, May 12, 2000.

—Supplemental Appropriations—

The military construction conference report also includes \$11.2 billion in FY 2000 supplemental appropriations, \$6.2 billion more than the president's request and \$2 billion less than the House-passed bill. This legislation includes (1) \$1.3 billion for anti-drug assistance in Columbia; (2) \$6.4 billion for on going peacekeeping operations in the Balkans, the rising cost of fuel and healthcare in the armed services, and funds for critical unfounded personnel and readiness accounts; and (3) \$361 for hurricane victims in New Jersey, North Carolina, and the Western United States (including the Los Alamos area).

Anti-Drug Activities

The conference report to H.R. 4425 contains \$1.3 billion in funding for the Plan Columbia initiative to counter drug production in Andean region of South America. The measure includes over \$1 billion for a directed regional approach to bring the fight against drugs to their sources. This regional approach includes (1) \$110 million for Bolivia; (2) \$20 million for Ecuador; and (3) \$18 million for other countries in the region. Also, included in the measure is \$315 million for helicopters (\$234 million for 18 Blackhawks; \$81 million for 42 "Huey II" helicopters. The Colombian Army will receive 30 of the Huey's and the Colombian National Police will receive 12.

Additionally, the appropriation includes (1) \$122 million for human rights and justice programs in the region (\$29 million more than the President requested); (2) \$185 million for training counter-narcotics battalions and intelligence activities in Colombia; and (3) \$117 million to establish three Forward Operation Locations that will provide U.S. surveillance aircraft support for DOD and multi-agency counter-drug operations in the Caribbean, South America, and Eastern Pacific.

Department of Defense

This measure contains \$6.4 billion in critical defense needs for operations in Kosovo, to address rising shortfalls in fuel costs and healthcare, and to address unfounded readiness and personnel accounts, among others. Specifically, the measure appropriates (1) \$2 billion to replenish critical operation and maintenance accounts that have been depleted by the on going Kosovo peacekeeping mission; (2) \$1.6 billion to address the Pentagon's rising fuel costs; (3) \$1.3 billion to avoid serious disruptions in the military health care program; (4) \$1.1 billion to address important unfunded personnel and readiness requirements; (5) \$40 million in development funding for Vieques Island, Puerto Rico; (6) \$148 million in disaster assistance for damage at U.S. bases; and (7) \$125 million to improve the Patriot missile's reliability.

Disaster Relief

The measure appropriates \$361 million for recouping costs imposed by Hurricane Floyd and other natural disasters. Specifically, the measure appropriates (1) \$81 million to forgive marketing loans made by the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to producer-owned associations or producers that suffered losses from Hurricanes Dennis, Floyd, or Irene; (2) \$16 million for the subsidy cost to support \$40 million in direct loans to fund new rural rental housing projects in areas damaged by Hurricanes Dennis, Floyd, or Irene; (3) \$14 million in rental assistance grants to assure that qualifying tenants in the 1,000 units to be constructed in hurricane-affected areas will pay no more than 30% of their income for housing expenses.

This supplemental appropriation also includes (1) \$63 million for National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), for hurricane and fishery disasters; (2) \$26 million for Economic Development Administration grants for disaster assistance; (3) \$41 million for the Small Business Administration's disaster loans program; (4) \$50 million to Federal Emergency Management Agency for buying-out flooded properties from available funds; (5) \$36 million for HUD's HOME investment partnership; and (6) \$25 million for Mozambique disaster assistance.

Finally, the \$361 million includes \$77 million for the Farm Service Agency (1) \$26 million for temporary staffing to assure continued delivery of programs to address the hard hit farmer income situation; (2) \$13 million for consent decree costs involving discrimination claims by African-American farmers; and (3) \$38 million to make computer system changes necessary to avoid potential failures that could impair program and payment delivery.

Other Appropriations

This supplemental appropriation also includes funding for numerous other disasters, environmental programs, transportation programs, law enforcement initiatives, and LIHEAP funds, among others. Specifically, the measure appropriates:

- * \$661 million for claims settlements and damages resulting from the Cerro Grande Fire in New Mexico;
- * \$350 million for wildlands emergency firefighting;
- * \$193 million for Department of Energy environmental cleanup (OH, KY)—critical nuclear weapons infrastructure needs (TN, SC, MO, TX, NM, NV)—and cyber-security activities;
- * \$700 million to address Coast Guard needs (including \$77 million for spare parts and health care shortages);
- * \$600 million for the Low Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP);
- * \$181 million for the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) for funding necessary to meet the deadline for implementing CALEA. CALEA preserves drug law enforcement's ability to perform court-authorized digital surveillance digital;
- * \$75 million for various FAA operations;

- * \$35 million for the Social Security Administration to respond to the increased workload resulting from the recent repeal of the Social Security earnings limit (*P.L. 106-182*);
- * \$20 million for salaries and expenses of the National Transportation Safety Board personnel to avert a funding shortfall created by Alaska Air and Egypt Air crash investigations;
- * \$18 million to address severe fire safety hazards in the Capitol and House and Senate Office Buildings recently reported by the Architect of the Capitol.
- * \$5 million for D.C. Police to reimburse costs associated with recent protests at the International Monetary Fund and World Bank; and
- * \$2 million for Commission on International Religious Freedom.

Major Legislative Provisions:

House Action:

The House passed similar legislation (H.R. 3908) by a 263-146 vote on March 30, 2000.

Additional Information:

See *Legislative Digest* Vol. XXIX, #8, March 24, 2000 for a description of the House-passed bill.



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